

Dr. Gary Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 8a, Developing Biblical Values, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 8a, Developing Biblical Values, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Gary Meadors, part of a series on worldview and values, explores the **relationship between a biblical worldview and the values** that stem from it. Meadors emphasizes that **worldview precedes and shapes values**, illustrating this with the concept of a transformed mind from Romans. He defines **values as basic personal beliefs derived from one's worldview**, guiding judgments and actions. The lecture distinguishes between **deontological (intrinsic, God-given "ought")** and **consequentialist (extrinsic, pragmatic "should") values**. Finally, Meadors highlights **love as the greatest value for believers**, defining it as the determined action to do good, and examines how love regulates the Christian life through the lens of Galatians and 2 Peter.

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 8a – Double
click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Theology → Knowing the Will of God).**



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3. Briefing Document: Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 8a, Developing Biblical Values, Part 1

Briefing Document: Dr. Gary Meadors, Knowing God's Will, Session 8a, Values, Part 1

Overview:

This lecture, the first part of session 8 on values within a larger series on worldview and values (GM8a), focuses on defining values, explaining their relationship to worldview, and introducing the concepts of deontological (intrinsic) and consequential (extrinsic) values. Dr. Meadors emphasizes that biblical values are derived from a transformed biblical worldview and are crucial for guiding our judgments and actions. He also begins to explore the concept of love as the greatest guiding value for believers, laying the groundwork for further discussion in the subsequent part of the session.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. The Primacy of Worldview in Shaping Values:

- Meadors reiterates the fundamental concept that **worldview precedes and shapes values**, not the other way around. He uses the transformed mind model from Romans 12:1-2 as a basis, stating, *"This transformed mind model is a biblical worldview that produces values. You get your values from your worldview, not vice versa. But the worldview comes first. The values come second. They're the product."*
- He emphasizes that everyone has a worldview, a "mental framework or a conceptual system through which we set our world where it is through which we see our world and ourselves." This framework, whether consciously acknowledged or not, influences how we interpret data and derive meaning.
- For Christians, the goal is to adjust their existing worldview to align with biblical values through the transformation of the mind.

2. Defining Values as Basic Personal Beliefs:

- Meadors defines a value as *"a basic personal belief."* He contrasts this with a worldview, which is a set of understandings.
- He identifies the most basic personal belief for biblical understanding as the existence of God and His communication, as highlighted in Exodus 3:14 and Hebrews concerning belief in God's existence.

- Values derived from our worldview guide our judgments about what we think and do, impacting various aspects of life, including finances and relationships. *"The values we recognize and apply guide our judgments about what we think and what we do."*
- Our actions, how we live, what we buy, and how we treat others serve as indicators of our underlying values.

3. The Spectrum of Values:

- Values range from *"non-negotiable moral beliefs to our personal preferences."*
- Meadors highlights the historical significance of values, citing examples like Tyndale and Wycliffe who risked their lives to translate the Bible, demonstrating how deeply held values can drive significant and even perilous choices.

4. Introducing Deontological (Intrinsic) and Consequential (Extrinsic) Values:

- **Deontological values** are defined as *"created values. They come from God. They are part of his created world, and they are non-negotiable."* These are intrinsic, inherently good, and represent what we *"ought to do."* They are ultimate values that organize other values.
- **Consequentialism**, on the other hand, operates in the domain of pragmatism and involves **extrinsic values**. These are *"not good in itself, but in what it achieves. It is derived and should be ordered by intrinsic values..."* These values relate to what we *"should do,"* which involves more consideration of the outcome.
- Meadors uses the analogy of being served poorly cooked meatloaf to illustrate consequentialism. While the intrinsic value might be honesty, the extrinsic value of protecting someone from embarrassment might lead to a less blunt response. He cautions that *"the end is not the justification of the means"* as a general principle.
- For Christians, "ought" (deontological) is sourced in God and God's Word, including the imperatives and implications of God's character.

5. The Importance of Understanding and Applying Value Categories:

- Meadors emphasizes the importance of understanding the technical terms like deontological and consequentialism because *"these terms expose the nature of values, they expose one's worldview and values."*
- Recognizing which domain (ought vs. pragmatic) primarily influences our decisions provides insight into our worldview and values system.
- He stresses the need not only to think but *"to know how we think"* and to engage in conscious deliberation and critical thinking regarding our values.

6. Love as the Greatest Guiding Value:

- Meadors poses the question, *"What is the greatest value that guides a believer?"* and answers definitively: *"The word is love."*
- He asserts that many have a *"view of the term love that is too small,"* clarifying that biblical love is more than just sentimental feelings or casual affection.
- He emphasizes that love is a *"covenant term"* in both the Old and New Testaments, often related to obedience and God's relationship with His people (e.g., Jacob and Esau).
- Drawing from the Great Commandment (love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself), Meadors argues that love must be at the top of the hierarchy of values.

7. Defining Biblical Love as Determined Action:

- Meadors provides a working definition of love: *"Love is the determination to do good, the greatest possible good, toward the object of love."*
- This definition emphasizes the active and intentional nature of love, distinguishing it from mere feelings or emotions. *"Love is not an emotion...love as an object principle is not based on emotion. Emotions always influence us...but the fact is that love is a choice."*
- Loving one's enemies, for example, involves actively planning and devising their good, even if they or others don't perceive it as such.
- Love is guided by one's worldview and values and regulates the application of the Spirit's freedom.

8. Love in Action: Galatians 5 and 6 and 2 Peter 1:

- Meadors analyzes Galatians 5:13-15 and 6:1-5, highlighting how the call to freedom should be exercised through love by serving one another and bearing one another's burdens, thus fulfilling the law of love and the law of Christ. He emphasizes that the fruit of the Spirit is a functional list for the church, operating under the rubric of love.
- He delves into 2 Peter 1:3-11, presenting it as a "wheel of love" where virtues are interconnected and build upon one another, starting with faith leading to virtue, then knowledge, self-control, patient endurance, godliness, brotherly love, culminating in love. *"Christian living is a virtue-driven life."* He contrasts this with the idea of a "purpose-driven life," suggesting that virtue is the primary driver.

Concluding Remarks (for Part 1):

Dr. Meadors concludes this part of the lecture by emphasizing the importance of consciously pursuing good relationships within the community, which is God's will. This requires self-awareness and an understanding of one's own worldview and values. He indicates that the discussion on "levels of values" and biblical commands will be continued in the subsequent part of the session (GM8b).

Key Quotes:

- *"This transformed mind model is a biblical worldview that produces values. You get your values from your worldview, not vice versa."*
- *"A value is a basic personal belief."*
- *"The values we recognize and apply guide our judgments about what we think and what we do."*
- *"Deontological values are created values. They come from God...and they are non-negotiable."*
- *"Love is the determination to do good, the greatest possible good, toward the object of love."*
- *"Christian living is a virtue-driven life."*

This briefing document captures the key concepts and arguments presented in the first part of Dr. Meadors' lecture on values. The discussion lays a crucial foundation for understanding how a biblical worldview shapes our values and how love serves as the ultimate guiding principle for Christian living.

4. Study Guide: Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 8a, Developing Biblical Values, Part 1

Understanding Biblical Worldview and Values

Quiz

1. According to the lecture, what is the relationship between worldview and values?
2. Define "worldview" as presented in the material. Why is it important for individuals to be aware of their own worldview?
3. Explain the difference between deontological and consequentialist values. Provide a brief example of each from the lecture.
4. What is presented as the most basic personal belief for biblical understanding, and why is it considered foundational?
5. How do personal values influence our judgments and actions, according to the lecture? Provide an example.
6. What is the definition of biblical love provided in the lecture, and why is it emphasized that love is more than just an emotion?
7. Explain how the concept of love regulates the tension between the "flesh" and the "Spirit" in the context of Galatians 5 and 6.
8. Describe the "wheel of love" presented in 2 Peter 1. What is the starting point and the culmination of this process?
9. What is the significance of virtue in Christian living, according to the lecture, contrasting it with a "purpose-driven life"?
10. Why does the lecturer emphasize the importance of learning technical terms like "ontology" and "consequentialism"?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The lecture states that worldview comes first and produces values. Values are derived from and are a product of one's worldview, not the other way around.
2. Worldview is defined as a lens, a mental framework or conceptual system through which we see our world and ourselves. It comprises the presuppositions and convictions that order our lives. Being aware of one's worldview is crucial for

understanding how we interpret data and make decisions, and for aligning it with biblical values after coming to Christ.

3. Deontological values are created values that come from God and are considered non-negotiable (the "ought"). Consequentialism pertains to pragmatism, where values are more negotiable and judged by their outcomes (what we "should" do). An example of deontological value is the inherent goodness of humanity as beings created in God's image, while an example of a consequentialist consideration was the decision not to be overly critical of the poorly cooked meal to avoid embarrassing the cook.
4. The most basic personal belief for biblical understanding is the existence of God and that He has communicated with humanity, particularly through the Bible. This is foundational because it establishes the basis for all other biblical values and principles.
5. Personal values, which are derived from our worldview, guide our judgments about what we think and do. For example, a student's value of immediate gratification (buying a new car) can lead to neglecting their education and incurring financial debt, illustrating how values shape our priorities and choices.
6. Biblical love is defined as the determination to do good, the greatest possible good, toward the object of love. It is emphasized that love is an action and a choice (a verbal noun, a principle of covenant loyalty), not primarily an emotion, although emotions can be involved. This is illustrated by the command to love one's enemies, which requires actively seeking their good.
7. In Galatians 5 and 6, love serves as the overarching principle that regulates the behavior of believers. Fulfilling the law of love (loving your neighbor) and Christ's law (bearing one another's burdens) are presented as the framework for living according to the Spirit and avoiding the works of the flesh within the church community.
8. The "wheel of love" in 2 Peter 1 starts with faith, which enables the supply of virtue. Each subsequent virtue (knowledge, self-control, patient endurance, godliness, brotherly love) is produced by the preceding one, culminating in love as the crown or ultimate expression of Christian character.
9. The lecture posits that Christian living is fundamentally virtue-driven, meaning our actions and decisions should be guided by cultivating godly character traits. This is contrasted with being merely "purpose-driven," suggesting that focusing

on developing virtue is the more foundational and biblical approach to Christian life.

10. The lecturer argues that technical terms expose the nature of values and one's worldview. Learning this vocabulary allows for a more precise understanding and communication of these concepts, similar to how specialized language is necessary in other fields. These terms can encapsulate complex ideas without requiring constant detailed explanation.

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the interconnectedness of worldview and values as presented by Dr. Meadors. How does one influence the other, and why is understanding this relationship crucial for Christian living?
2. Compare and contrast deontological and consequentialist approaches to values. How might a Christian ethically navigate situations where these two approaches seem to conflict? Provide examples to illustrate your points.
3. Analyze Dr. Meadors' definition of biblical love. In what ways does this definition challenge common understandings of love, and what are the practical implications of viewing love as "the determination to do good"?
4. Explore the significance of the virtue list in 2 Peter 1 (the "wheel of love"). How does this passage suggest a process of spiritual growth, and what role does love play within this framework?
5. Critique the idea of a "virtue-driven life" as the core of Christian living, as opposed to a "purpose-driven life." What are the strengths and potential weaknesses of each perspective based on the provided material?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Worldview:** A fundamental set of beliefs, presuppositions, and convictions that shape how an individual perceives, interprets, and interacts with the world and themselves. It acts as a mental framework or lens.
- **Values:** Basic personal beliefs derived from one's worldview that guide judgments about what is important, right, and how one should act. They are the product of a recognized and applied worldview.
- **Deontological Values:** Intrinsic, non-negotiable values that come from God and are inherently good, representing what one "ought" to do. They are part of God's created order.
- **Consequentialism:** An ethical framework where the morality of an action is judged by its consequences or outcomes. These values are more negotiable and relate to what one "should" do.
- **Ontology:** The branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being or existence. In the context of worldview, it addresses questions of "who am I?"
- **Epistemology:** The branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope of knowledge, its justification, and the reliability of claims to knowledge. In worldview, it addresses "what do I know?"
- **Axiology:** The branch of philosophy dealing with values, including ethics and aesthetics. In worldview, it addresses "what should I do?" and encompasses the study of values.
- **Intrinsic Values:** Values that are good in themselves, not because of their effects or usefulness. Deontological values are considered intrinsic.
- **Extrinsic Values:** Values that are good because of what they lead to or achieve (their consequences). Consequentialist considerations often involve extrinsic values.
- **Covenant:** A solemn agreement between two or more parties, often used in the Bible to describe the relationship between God and humanity. Love is presented as a covenant term in the lecture.
- **Virtue:** A quality considered morally good or desirable in a person. In 2 Peter 1, virtues are presented as building blocks in a process of spiritual growth culminating in love.

5. FAQs on Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 8a, Developing Biblical Values, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Worldview and Values (Based on Dr. Meadors' Lecture)

1. How do worldview and values relate to each other according to the lecture?

The lecture emphasizes that worldview precedes and produces values. Your fundamental mental framework or conceptual system (worldview) acts as a lens through which you interpret data and derive meaning. The resulting values are the product of this interpretation and application of your worldview. This is illustrated with Romans 12:1-2, where the transformation of the mind (worldview) leads to ethical application (values).

2. What is a worldview, and why is it important for everyone to understand their own?

A worldview is defined as a mental framework or conceptual system, a lens through which we see our world and ourselves. It encompasses our presuppositions and convictions that order our lives. It's crucial for everyone to understand their own worldview because it shapes how they interpret information, make decisions, and live their lives, regardless of their background or beliefs. For new Christians, understanding their existing worldview is the first step in allowing a transformed mind to adjust it to biblical values.

3. What are values, according to the lecture, and where do they originate?

Values are defined as basic personal beliefs that are derived from our worldview. They are the product of the worldview that we recognize and apply. The lecture highlights that the most basic personal belief for biblical understanding is the existence of God and His communication to humanity. Values guide our judgments about what we think and do and are constantly at work in our lives, influencing our actions, choices, and treatment of others.

4. What is the distinction between deontological and consequentialist values?

Deontological values are described as created values that come from God and are intrinsic, inherently good, and non-negotiable. They represent what we "ought" to do and are the ultimate values that organize other values. Consequentialist values, on the other hand, fall under pragmatism and are extrinsic. They are not good in themselves but are valued for what they achieve. These are more negotiable and represent what we "should" do, ideally being ordered by intrinsic (deontological) values.

5. What is the greatest value that should guide a believer, and how is it defined in the lecture?

The greatest value that should guide a believer is love. However, the lecture argues that many people have a limited understanding of biblical love. Love is defined not primarily as a feeling or emotion, but as "the determination to do good, the greatest possible good, toward the object of love." This definition emphasizes that love is an action, a choice guided by worldview and values, and often involves understanding and acting in accordance with what is truly good for the other person, even if it's difficult or doesn't feel emotional.

6. How do the passages in Galatians 5-6 and 2 Peter 1 illustrate the application of love and values in the Christian life?

Galatians 5-6 illustrates that fulfilling God's law (loving your neighbor) and Christ's law (bearing one another's burdens) are central to the Christian life and the functioning of the church. Love serves as the overarching principle that regulates the tension between the flesh and the Spirit. 2 Peter 1 presents a "wheel of love" where virtues like faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patient endurance, godliness, and brotherly love build upon each other, culminating in love. This passage emphasizes that Christian living is a virtue-driven life, requiring conscious effort and moral development.

7. Why does the lecture emphasize the importance of learning technical terms like "deontological" and "consequentialism"?

The lecture argues that technical terms are important because they expose the nature of values and one's underlying worldview. Learning this vocabulary allows for a more precise understanding and discussion of ethical frameworks and decision-making processes. These terms can encapsulate complex ideas, enabling more efficient communication and deeper analysis of how different value systems operate.

8. What is the significance of the idea that "we need not only to think but to know how we think"?

This statement underscores the importance of self-awareness and conscious deliberation in our thinking. It highlights the need to understand the processes and frameworks that shape our thoughts and decisions, particularly our worldview and values. The lecture connects this to critical thinking and self-examination, suggesting that an unexamined life, especially for a Christian, is insufficient for navigating the serious domain of values and actions.